

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 ANKARA 01996 181858Z

51

ACTION SS-30

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R 181202Z MAR 74

FM AMEMBASSY ANKARA

TO AMCONSUL ISTANBUL

INFO SECSTATE WASHDC 3237

S E C R E T ANKARA 1996

EXDIS

FOLLOWING REPEATED FOR YOUR ACTION/INFO:

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY ANKARA IMMEDIATE

INFO USMISSION GENEVA

S E C R E T STATE 50970

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: SNAR, TU

SUBJECT: TURKISH OPIUM BAN: SISCO-ESENBEL CONVERSATION

REF: ANKARA 1776

1. AMBASSADOR ESENBEL CALLED ON UNDER SECRETARY FOR POLITICAL AFFAIRS SISCO MARCH 13 AT ESENBEL'S REQUEST TO DISCUSS TURKISH OPIUM BAN. DAVIES, ACTING ASSISTANT SECRETARY, NEA; DILLON, COUNTRY DIRECTOR FOR TURKEY; AND HIRSHORN, NEA/TUR, WERE ALSO PRESENT.

2. MR. SISCO SAID THAT HE HAD RECEIVED AMBASSADOR MACOMBER'S REPORT OF HIS CONVERSATION WITH AMBASSADOR ESENBEL (REFTEL); THAT AMBASSADOR MACOMBER HAD ACCURATELY LAID OUT THE U.S. POSITION; AND THAT MR. SISCO WANTED TO

SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 02 ANKARA 01996 181858Z

UNDERScore THE POINTS THAT HAD BEEN MADE BY AMBASSADOR

MACOMBER. SISCO STRESSED THE SERIOUS HIGH-LEVEL CONCERN WITHIN THE USG AT A POSSIBLE CHANGE IN TURKISH POLICY ON POPPIES. IT WAS OUR UNDERSTANDING THAT THE TURKISH GOVERNMENT WAS LEANING IN THE DIRECTION OF RESUMPTION OF CULTIVATION BUT THAT NO FORMAL DECISION HAD BEEN MADE. SISCO AGAIN underscored the point made by Ambassador MACOMBER, that the entire range of relations between the U.S. and Turkey could be adversely affected if the ban were rescinded. SISCO said that the U.S. and Turkey had worked together to achieve an understanding in 1971..

TURKEY HAD SHOWN GREAT COURAGE AND HAD DONE THE RIGHT THING IN ESTABLISHING THE BAN. SISCO BELIEVED THAT THERE HAD BEEN AN UNDERSTANDING BETWEEN THE TWO GOVERNMENTS. HE POINTED OUT THAT THE EXECUTIVE BRANCH, FROM TOP ON DOWN, AS WELL AS THE CONGRESS, HAD DEEPLY COMMITTED ITSELF IN COMMENDING THE TURKS FOR THEIR ACTION. THE BAN HAD HAD A DECISIVE EFFECT IN REDUCING THE AMOUNT OF ILLICIT HEROIN AVAILABLE IN THE UNITED STATES. SECRETARY KISSINGER, WHO IS FULLY AU COURANT WITH THE SITUATION, IS EQUALLY CONCERNED. ESENBEL WOULD BE HEARING SHORTLY FROM MR. RUSH WHO ALSO WANTED TO DISCUSS THIS MATTER WITH HIM. (RUSH HAS SINCE ASKED ESENBEL TO SEE HIM AT 11:30 A.M., MARCH 15.)

3. SISCO SAID THAT IN PREPARATION FOR THIS MEETING HE HAD CALLED ROBERT McNAMARA OF THE WORLD BANK TO ASK WHETHER THERE WAS SOMETHING THE BANK COULD DO. McNAMARA REPLIED THAT THE BANK'S RELATIONS WITH TURKEY WERE VERY GOOD AND THAT THE BANK WOULD BE RECEPTIVE TO ANY REASONABLE REQUEST THE TURKS MIGHT MAKE REGARDING HELP FOR DEVELOPMENT OF VARIOUS REGIONS.

4. AMBASSADOR ESENBEL SAID THAT HE REALIZED THAT THE BANK WAS PREPARED TO BE HELPFUL AS WAS AID. HE THEN REFERRED TO A SET OF NOTES WHICH PRIME MINISTER ECEVIT HAD PREPARED FOR HIM IN ORDER TO CONVEY THE CURRENT THINKING OF THE TURKISH GOVERNMENT. HE FIRST MADE THE POINT THAT NO REPEAT NO DECISION HAS BEEN MADE AS OF TODAY. THE GOT WILL STUDY THE MATTER FURTHER AND THERE

SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 03 ANKARA 01996 181858Z

WILL BE FURTHER DISCUSSIONS WITH THE U.S. ESENBEL UNDERLINED THE IMPORTANCE OF THIS BY POINTING OUT THAT THIS MEANT THAT NO PLANTING WOULD BE AUTHORIZED FOR APRIL. THEREFORE, THE EARLIEST THAT POPPY PLANTING COULD BE RESUMED WOULD BE IN OCTOBER. THIS WOULD GIVE BOTH GOVERNMENTS AMPLE TIME TO DISCUSS THE MATTER.

5. THE TURKISH GOVERNMENT FELT THAT THE DECISION IMPOSING THE BAN WAS TAKEN FOR HUMANITARIAN CONCERNS. HOWEVER, THEY HAVE BEEN IN TOUCH WITH THE PEOPLE IN THE POPPY AREAS AND BELIEVE THAT THE EXISTING SYSTEM HAS NOT WORKED. THERE WERE TOO MANY UNHAPPY PEOPLE. MANY PEOPLE WERE NOT COVERED BY THE COMPENSATION SCHEME. THE PLAN WAS NOT WELL CONCEIVED.

6. ECEVIT'S SECOND POINT WAS THAT THE GOT BELIEVES THE BASIC PHILOSOPHY WAS NOT RIGHT. FINANCIAL TRANSFERS FROM ONE GOVERNMENT TO ANOTHER ARE ACCEPTABLE BUT COMPENSATION FROM ONE GOVERNMENT DIRECTLY TO THE CITIZENS OF ANOTHER COUNTRY IS NOT A GOOD PRACTICE. ESENBEL MADE THE POINT THAT IT WAS NOT A QUESTION OF MORE AID. RATHER, THE GOT WAS DISSATISFIED WITH THE BASIC CONCEPT.

7. SISCO SAID THAT HE AGREED THAT THE BAN HAD BEEN PROMULGATED FOR HUMANITARIAN REASONS -- IT HAD HAD TREMENDOUS POSITIVE IMPACT. HE POINTED OUT THAT THESE HUMANITARIAN CONSIDERATIONS STILL APPLY. SISCO DID NOT AGREE THAT THE SYSTEM DID NOT WORK. HE THOUGHT THAT, GIVEN THE SHORT PERIOD OF THE TIME ELAPSED SINCE THE BAN, REMARKABLE PROGRESS HAD BEEN MADE. WE WERE MOVING IN THE DIRECTION OF DEVELOPMENT IN THE POPPY REGION BUT OLD PATTERNS DO NOT BREAK DOWN EITHER EASILY OR QUICKLY. THE PROGRAM HAS NOT BEEN GIVEN AMPLE OPPORTUNITY AND TIME TO DEMONSTRATE WHETHER OR NOT IT WILL BE SUCCESSFUL. SISCO ALSO POINTED OUT THAT ASSISTANCE HAS BEEN GOVERNMENT-TO-GOVERNMENT, AND THAT IT WAS UP TO THE GOT TO DETERMINE HOW THE FUNDS WERE TO BE USED. EMPHASIZING HE UNDERSTOOD TURKISH SENSITIVITIES, HE POINTED OUT THAT ONE REASON THE U.S HAD DISCUSSED THE MULTER WITH INTER-NATIONAL BODIES WAS TO TRY TO FIND A WAY TO HELP DEFUSE

SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 04 ANKARA 01996 181858Z

AND MINIMIZE THE BILATERAL ASPECTS. SISCO SAID HE HOPED THAT ESENBEL WOULD REPORT HIS COMMENTS AS FULLY AS POSSIBLE.

8. ESENBEL SAID THAT HE HAD MORE POINTS TO MAKE REGARDING THE THINKING OF THE GOT. THE THIRD POINT WAS THAT THE PRESENT GOVERNMENT IS DEMOCRATICALLY ELECTED. THE PEOPLE IN THE PROVINCES ARE FUNDAMENTALLY AGAINST THE POPPY BAN, AND THE GOVERNMENT BELIEVES IT MUST FOLLOW THE WISHES OF THE PEOPLE. IF IT DOES NOT, THE PEOPLE WILL SAY IT IS BECAUSE OF AMERICAN PRESSURE. SISCO SAID HE UNDERSTOOD THIS POINT, BUT THAT THIS DEPENDS ON THE POSTURE THE GOVERNMENT ADOPTS.

9. ESENBEL SAID THE FINAL POINT THAT HE WISHED TO CONVEY WAS THAT IF THE GOVERNMENT DOES DECIDE TO RESUME CULTIVATION, IT WILL BE UNDER STRICT CONTROL. POPPIES WILL ONLY BE GROWN ON LAND WHICH IS CONTIGUOUS. THE GOT IS THINKING IN TERMS OF MEETING THE GAP IN THE WORLD OPIUM SUPPLY SHORTAGE. THE GOT BELIEVES IT IS WRONG FOR THE U.S. TO ASK ANOTHER COUNTRY (INDIA) TO INCREASE ITS PRODUCTION WHEN TURKEY HAD BEEN PRODUCING OPIUM TRADITIONALLY. IT IS READY TO COOPERATE WITH THE U.S. IN THE EVENT THAT SUCH A DECISION IS TAKEN. HOWEVER, THE GOVERNMENT WILL BE GLAD TO CONTINUE THE DIALOGUE. THE MAIN STEP IT HAS TAKEN IN THIS DIRECTION IS TO SKIP THE APRIL PLANTING SO THERE WILL BE TIME TO DISCUSS THE MATTER FURTHER.

10. DILLON ASKED ESENBEL IF HIS COMMENTS MEANT THAT THE TURKISH GOVERNMENT WAS NO LONGER INTERESTED IN THE DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS IN THE POPPY REGION. ESENBEL REPLIED THAT THAT WAS CORRECT. THE GOVERNMENT FELT THAT BOTH COMPENSATION AND DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS HAD BEEN ILL-CONCEIVED.

11. SISCO ASKED FOR ASSURANCE FROM AMBASSADOR ESENBEL THAT: (A) THE DIALOGUE WOULD CONTINUE, AND (B) THAT NO DECISION WOULD BE TAKEN WITHOUT INFORMING THE U.S. FIRST. ESENBEL AGREED. HE WANTED THE U.S. TO KNOW THAT THE SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 05 ANKARA 01996 181858Z

GOT WILL LISTEN TO WHAT THE U.S. HAS TO SAY BUT IS CLEARLY MOVING IN THE DIRECTION HE HAD JUST OUTLINED. SISCO REPEATED THAT HE WANTED THE TURKS TO LOOK AT IT FROM THE POINT OF VIEW OF OUR OVERALL MUTUALITY OF OBJECTIVES AND THE OVERALL REALTIONSHIP BETWEEN THE U.S. AND TURKEY. KISSINGER.

MACOMBER

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